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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION I

J. F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02203

June 24, 1985

Mayor Brian Lawler
New Bedford City Hall
133 Williams Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Mayor Lawler:

I am writing to you concerning access to the Acushnet River Estuary in New Bedford. The city of New Bedford is well aware of the contamination problem and Superfund status of this area. In response to citizen concerns, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Mass. Department of Environmental Quality and Engineering (DEQE), and the Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH) staff members recently investigated possible access areas along the eastern and western shores of the Acushnet River Estuary above the Coggeshall Street Bridge.

EPA has identified the north side of the Coffin Street Cove as a high priority for fencing, as noted in our May, 1985 press release. A playground borders the cove and several dirt paths indicate that the estuary and cove shoreline are easily accessible. The known high PCB concentrations in this area further support the need for a fence separating the playground from the shoreline. It is EPA's determination that approximately 150-200 yards of fencing, between an existing fence (repairs needed) or building and the Mars More Value Company facility, would be an effective action.

As the playground property is city owned, the Agency wishes to give the city of New Bedford an opportunity to erect a fence. This issue was recently discussed in a June 17, 1985 telephone conversation between Jackie Prince of my staff and David Kennedy of City Hall. The Agency, however, is prepared to take action under Section 104 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to erect the fence. The Agency requests that the city notify EPA as soon as possible whether or not the city will be undertaking such action. If you have any questions, please contact Jackie Prince of my staff at 223-1951.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Patricia L. Meany".

Merrill S. Hohman
Director, Waste Management Division